

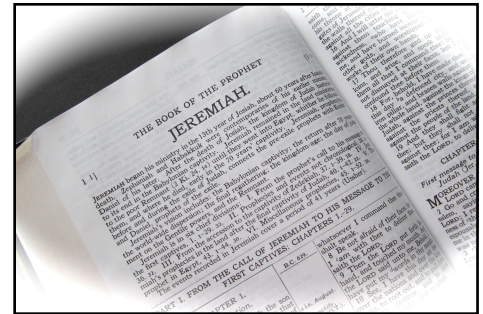
# Books of The Bible

## A Survey of The Prophecy of Jeremiah - Part 1

### Introduction

As the book of Jeremiah is read, it is hard not to think of how apt it is today regarding many churches and the contrast of the “leaders” in them. The people of God were functional in religious duties but void of devotion to God. Sin abounded on every hand and the disciplining hand of God was on them. To Jeremiah it was to watch the lingering death throes of the nation as the leaders rebelled against the discipline of God and led the people further away. False prophets denied the chastisement for was Jerusalem not the city of the great King, would God allow it to be destroyed? Was the land not their God given land?

God would never give it into the hands of the pagan Assyrians or Babylonians! The loveliness of vitality had long gone, and all that was left was desolation, weakness, captivity and death. To me that is very similar to many churches today, functioning, but the Lord is outside. Rather than obey God they will tolerate sin and disobedience. Empty seats abound and saints are taken captive by the world or persecuted by men who have little regard for the truth.



It is so easy to become angry at the men, to get disgusted at the state of things, but such was not the character of Jeremiah for he had the heart of God. This man suffered and he wept as he saw the ruination of the people of God. His was a thankless ministry of entreating pleas for restoration before the judgment of God would fall. His work was to stand alone against the onrush of moral ruination, and yet have to stand aside and watch with utter tenderness and grief the people of God rush into devastation.

In this day of departure those who should stand are no where to be seen, or indifference marks the “spiritual leaders” who are more concerned about the material than the spiritual welfare of the saints of God. There is a need for Jeremiah’s today, but when they stand they can be assured that they will be set aside. It will be a lonely path of sorrow, misrepresentation, and grief, but how precious they will be to God.

Jeremiah was a man whose heart emotionally was in fellowship with God. He recognized that the devastation, destruction, and death was due to their unrepentant sin and discipline of God. He wept. He did not criticize the spiritual or governmental leaders but utter grief filled his heart.

### Key Verses:

- 1) “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.” (ch. 1:5)
- 2) “What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?” (ch. 2:5)
- 3) “Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you.” (ch. 3:12)
- 4) “Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings.” (ch. 3:22)
- 5) “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (ch. 17:9)
- 6) “Thus saith the Lord, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.” (ch. 29:10-11)
- 7) “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, though I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days,

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saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, "Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer. 31:31-34)

**Key Words:**

Backsliding (9)  
Return (47)  
Forsake \forsaken (24)

**Key Concepts:**

Sin will be punished, but there is compassion with God for those who repent.

**Jeremiah The Author**

- 1) The man
  - a) His name means "Jehovah establishes", or "Jehovah appoints"
  - b) Jeremiah came from Anathoth (ch. 1:1), and was the son of Hilkiyah (ch. 1:1)
  - c) He was commanded by God not to marry (ch. 16:2)
  - d) He was one of the prophets spoken of in the New Testament (Matt. 2:17, 18; 21:13)
  - e) The Lord was mistaken for Jeremiah (Matt. 16:14)
  - f) His father was one of the priestly family, therefore, Jeremiah was both priest and prophet (ch. 1:1). From Aaron two lines developed, Eleazar and Ithamar (1 Chron. 6:3). It was from the line of Ithamar that Jeremiah came.
  - g) He was a man who wept (ch. 9:10)
    - i) Christ, Paul, Peter, and John all wept. (Matt. 26:75; Lk. 19:41; Jn. 11:35; Phil. 3:18; Rev. 5:4)
    - ii) How precious their tears were to God, He put them in a bottle. (Psa. 56:8)
    - iii) Thankful there is coming a day when there will be no tears and no crying. (Rev. 21:4)
  - h) Knew in himself his inability for the task. (ch. 1:6)
  - i) Despite his concerns about the task committed to him, yet under the mighty hand of God he was a fortified city, an iron pillar, and walls of brass against the whole country (ch. 1:18). Due to his God given empowerment, He as fearless in his proclamations and due to the dreadfulness of the impending judgment on his people, he was utterly sincere and unwavering in his intercession. He was a man of prayer. (ch. 1:6; 4:10)
  - j) His ministry of warnings was not heeded and indeed he was mocked, and his life was one of opposition. (ch. 7:1-15; 26:1-11)
  - k) Identifying himself with the sorrows and miseries of others. (ch. 8:18-9:3; 13:15-17)
- 2) He was one of eight men called "Jeremiah"
  - a) An inhabitant of Libnah, whose daughter was married to Josiah, and gave birth to Jehoahaz. (2 Kgs. 23:31)
  - b) A Manassehite, who was the head of the family. (1 Chron. 5:23-24)
  - c) A Benjamite, who joined with David at Ziklag. (1 Chron. 12:1-4)
  - d) A Gadite who joined with David. (1 Chron. 12:8-10)
  - e) Another Gadite. (1 Chron. 12:13)
  - f) A priest who sealed the covenant with Nehemiah. (Neh. 12:1, 12, 34)
  - g) A descendant of Jonadab. (Jer. 35:6)
  - h) Jeremiah of Anathoth. (Jer. 1:1)
- 3) He was hated for declaring the message of God
  - a) Hated by his brethren (ch. 12:6)
  - b) Beaten and put in stocks (ch. 20:1-4)

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- c) Imprisoned (ch. 37:18)
  - d) Threatened with death (ch. 38:4)
- 4) Jeremiah's distresses were manifested in His cries. He speaks of:
- a) "Like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter" (ch. 11:19)
  - b) "Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper?" (ch. 12:1)
  - c) "I sat alone because of thy hand" (ch. 15:17)
  - d) Thou art "my refuge in the day of affliction" (ch. 16:19)
  - e) "Shall evil be recompensed for good?" (ch. 18:20)
  - f) "A burning fire, shut up in my bones" (ch. 20:9)

#### Peculiarities

It is only in Jeremiah we read:

- a) "The generation of His wrath" (ch. 7:29)
- b) "Neither could they blush" (ch. 6:15; 8:12)

#### The Sins Of Israel

- 1) They burned incense to other gods and worshipped the works of their own hands (ch. 1:16)
- 2) They worshipped stones and stocks to be the source of their life (ch. 3:9)
- 3) They forgot God for days without number (ch. 2:32)
- 4) They were marked by hardheartedness (ch. 5:3)
- 5) They were marked by unfaithfulness (ch. 5:4, 5)
- 6) They were guilty of deceit (ch. 5:1, 2)
- 7) They mocked the commands and threatenings of God (ch. 5:12)
- 8) They were dishonest in their judgments (ch. 5:28)
- 9) They resisted the Word of God through His prophets and were unrepentant: "And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not." (ch. 7:13; 11:7; 25:3; 26:5; 29:19; 32:33)
- 10) They worshipped heathen gods including the "Queen of Heaven" (ch. 7:18; 44:17)
- 11) They stole, murdered, committed adultery, swore falsely, burned incense to Baal, and walked after other gods (ch. 7:9)
- 12) Refused to learn the lessons of history (ch. 7:12)
- 13) They prophesied falsely (ch. 8:8)
- 14) The king burned the Word of God (ch. 36:23)
- 15) There was unilateral corruption (ch. 2:26; 6:13)

#### What is God's evaluation of Israel and what are the consequences?

- 1) "My people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish (foolish) children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge" (ch. 4:22)
- 2) "Surely these are poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the LORD, nor the judgment of their God" (ch. 5:4)
- 3) "My people know not the judgment of the Lord" (ch. 8:7)
- 4) Judgement will be unilateral (ch. 44:12)

#### The Manifestation of God in Jeremiah

- 1) His Names and Titles
  - a) Lord GOD (ch. 1:6)
  - b) The Lord of Hosts (ch. 6:6)
  - c) God is called "The portion of Jacob", "the former of all things", "The Lord of hosts" (ch. 10:16)

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- d) The “Hope of Israel, the Saviour” (ch. 14:8)
- e) “My strength, and my fortress, and my refuge” (ch. 16:19)
- f) Hope of Israel (ch. 17:13)
- g) Fountain of Living waters (ch. 17:13)
- h) My Praise (ch. 17:14)
- i) My hope in the day of evil (ch. 17:17)
- j) A potter (ch. 18:2, 3, 4, 6)
- k) God of Israel (ch. 19:15)
- l) The Maker (ch. 33:2)
- m) “The Great, the Mighty GOD, the Lord of Hosts is His Name” (ch. 32:18)
- n) “The Branch of Righteousness” (ch. 33:15)
- o) “The day of the Lord God of Hosts” (ch. 46:10)
- p) “The King, whose name is the Lord of Hosts” (ch. 46:18)
- q) “The Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel” (ch. 46:25)

2) Truths about God

- a) God is the God of truth and cannot be frustrated in His decrees
  - i) God had said that Zedekiah would be taken captive (ch. 32:4), and he was (ch. 39:7)
  - ii) God had said that he would be blind (2 kgs. 25:7), and his eyes were put out (ch. 39:7)
  - iii) God had said that the city would be destroyed (ch. 38:23), and it was (ch. 39:8)
  - iv) God had said that he would see Nebuchadnezzar (ch. 32:4), and he did (ch. 39:5)
- b) God is not mocked. In Exodus the children of Israel cried and the Lord heard them, but in Jeremiah they cry and the Lord does not hear. (Ex. 2:23; Num. 20:16; Jer. 14:12)
- c) God who causes the rebellious to be turned, then there is repentance and instruction (ch. 31:18-19), but man turns in rebellion (ch. 32:33).
- d) God is sovereign whither it is dealing with an individual (ch. 1:5) or nations (ch. 47:1; 48:1; 50:1)
- e) God is omniscient knowing all things, for He knew Jeremiah before He was born (ch. 1:5)

His Method of Teaching

Jeremiah was used by God to warn the people orally and by signs.

The sign	The meaning	Reference
The almond tree	God will hasten His word	Ch. 1:11-12
The seething pot coming from the North	The judgment is coming from the North	Ch. 1:13-14
The Tile	The siege coming on Jerusalem	Ch. 4:1-8
The girdle which became good for nothing	Israel has become as the girdle, failing to be what they should have been good for	Ch. 13:1-11
The clay pot in the potter’s house	Israel in the hand of God though broken by His discipline will be made anew	Ch. 18-19
The two baskets of figs	The good figs represent those who went into captivity under Babylon, the bad ones represented those who rebelled against the discipline and warnings of God by staying in the land or going to Egypt.	Ch. 24:1-10

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The sign	The meaning	Reference
The cup of fury	The cup of divine judgment on Jerusalem and the nations	Ch. 25:15-38
The wooden yoke	Those who refuse to be yoked to God will come under the yoke of Babylon in captivity	Ch. 27:2-22
Jeremiah purchases a field despite the impending captivity	The conscious belief that God will bring them back to the land	Ch. 32:7-15
The Rechabites (the only living sign)	These sons were more faithful to the instructions of their father than Israel was to God	Ch. 35:1-19
The stones buried in the clay	The downfall of Egypt	Ch. 43:8-9
The scroll tied to a rock and thrown into the Euphrates	The downfall of Babylon	Ch. 51:63-64

### Concluding Thoughts

#### The changing circumstances of life.

It is not easy when life takes an abrupt change and one is taken from their “normal work” for God, and by all appearances, will never get doing it again. John Baptist knew this experience as did Paul, John, Ezekiel and Jeremiah.

- a) Both Ezekiel and Jeremiah were born into the priesthood but that never developed. They found themselves in a foreign land where there was no Temple, altar, nor functioning. God gave them a new work, that of being a prophet, and what a blessing that was.
- b) Paul was a great missionary and then was imprisoned. What a blessing that was, for it was while he was in prison he wrote Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon and Timothy.
- c) Because these men were set apart we have their writings today. God knew the situation before he ever did, and instead of getting despondent about his circumstances, he let God use them for His glory.

I find Jeremiah exceedingly difficult to give an easy structure, however, the following can be seen:

- a) Material written by Jeremiah (ch.1:1-51:64)
- b) Material in chapter 51 was written by another (ch. 51:64)
- c) If the book is considered by date it will be discovered it is not chronological. It is orderly for there are:
  - i) Historical section:
    1. Undated prophecies (ch. 2-20)
    2. Dated prophecies (ch. 21-39)
  - ii) An historical section (chs. 40-45)
    1. Prophecies after the fall of Jerusalem (chs. 40-45)
    2. Prophecies concerning the Gentile nations (chs. 46-51)

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.**

**John 16:13**

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